(b) whether there is a slow-down of the project just because it was the pet scheme of the previous Government also whether there is a change in the monitoring mechanism and contractual arrangements of the previous Government; and

(c) whether transparency and honesty in tender deals and quality in execution would be ensured if so what means and devices would be evolved?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) The Golden Quadrilateral Project is a part of National Highways Development Project (Phase I & II) which was approved in principle by the Government in the year 2000 with estimated cost of Rs. 54,000 crores (at 1999 prices). The Prime Minister's Office monitors all important infrastructure projects including Golden Quadrilateral.

(b) No, Sir. There is no change in monitoring mechanism or contractual arrangements.

(c) Yes, Sir. Transparency and honesty in tenders is fully ensured. The work is awarded through a transparent, competitive bidding process. The tenders are evaluated as per laid down procedures. The quality of work is ensured through experienced supervision consultants. There is provision of fully equipped laboratory for testing of quality of construction under each contract. The quality audit of contracts are being done by reputed organisation such as Engineers India Limited and Central Road Research Institute.

Transfer of land for toll plaza

1020. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P.GOYAL: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Haryana Government has backed out of its promise to transfer 21 acres land for toll plaza at Delhi-Gurgaon border;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for such move;

(c) whether it is a fact that NHAI has already started work on levelling the construction site; and

(d) if so, what are the step from Government to resolve the matter?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AID HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (d) The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has requested for 21 acres of land belonging to Haryana Tourism/

Haryana Urban Development Authority for construction of a toll plaza at Delhi-Haryana border on National Highways-8. The matter has been taken up with the State Government by NHAI and the decision of the Government of Haryana is awaited. In anticipation of approval, the concessionaire has started work at site.

National Highway between Vallarpadam and Kalamassery

1021. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal of the Kerala Government seeking sanction for National Highway project between Vallarpadam and Kalamassery to link with Vallarpadam Trans-shipment Terminal is pending with Government;

(b) if so, the time by which the sanction is likely to be accorded;

(c) whether the State Government of Kerala have sought some engineering solutions from the National Highways Authority to reduce certain environmental impact; and

(d) if so, whether Government would consider to extend the assistance requested for?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) No National Highway project from the Government of Kerala for linking Vallarpadam and Kalamassery has been received. However, Cochin Port Trust has requested the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) for NH connectivity to Vallarpadam International container Trans-shipment Terminal.

(b) It is too early to indicate the time frame for sanction.

(c) and (d) The NHAI has approached the Kerala Costal Zone Management Authority for Costal Regulation Zone's (CRZ) clearance. The Government of Kerala has recommended for CRZ's clearance to the Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of India, Further action depends on the response from the Ministry of Environment and Forest.

Bifurcation of MMD

1022. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether demands have been made to bifurcate the MMD (Mercantile Marine Department) under the Directorate General of Shipping;